

## CLAIMS

1. A recording medium, comprising:

a digital stream;

5 a plurality of pieces of playback path information, each indicating a playback path for the digital stream; and

a control program instructing a playback device to play the digital stream using the playback path information,

wherein the control program includes a selection procedure which  
10 causes the playback device to select at least one of the pieces of playback path information using a value stored in a status register, the value indicating an age of a user set on the playback device.

2. The recording medium of Claim 1, wherein

15 the control program instructs the playback device to check a register-stored value indicating one of a country, and

the selection procedure is performed only if the register-stored value is a predetermined value.

20 3. A playback device, comprising:

an execution unit operable to execute a control program recorded on a recording medium; and

a playback unit operable to play a digital stream recorded on the recording medium,

25 wherein the recording medium has a plurality of pieces of playback path information recorded thereon,

the execution unit selects at least one of the pieces of playback path information according to the control program, and

the playback unit plays the digital stream based on the selected at least one of the pieces of playback path information.

4. The playback device of Claim 3 including a plurality of status registers, wherein

one of the status registers stores therein an age of a user, and the execution unit executes the control program to compare the age to a constant, and selects the at least one of the pieces of playback path information according to a comparison result thereof.

5. The playback device of Claim 4, wherein

the status registers includes a register for storing therein a value indicating one of a country, and

the execution of the control program is performed to judge whether the value is a predetermined value, and the selection of the at least one of the pieces of playback path information is performed only if the value is determined as the predetermined value.

6. The playback device of Claim 3, wherein

the recording medium is a first recording medium, and one of the first recording medium and a second recording medium is loaded on the playback device, and

the playback device, further comprising:

a conversion unit operable to convert a numeric indicating an age into a playback level when the second recording medium is loaded; and

an auxiliary playback unit operable to, when the second recording medium is loaded, select from among a plurality of pieces of playback

path information recorded on the second recording medium, a piece having the playback level, and play a digital stream recorded on the second recording medium according to the selected piece,

wherein the execution of the control program is performed only  
5 when the first recording medium is loaded, and the selection of the at least one of the pieces of playback path information is performed according to a result of the execution.

7. The playback device of Claim 6, wherein

10 the second recording medium has one or more country specific tables recorded thereon,

each of the country specific tables describes mapping information in which rating levels of a rating system for a country are associated with level IDs, and

15 the conversion into the playback level includes

converting the age-indicating numeric into a rating level of a rating system for a country to which the playback device belongs,

obtaining, from among level IDs in mapping information described in a country specific table for the country, a level ID  
20 associated with the rating level, and designating the obtained level ID as the playback level.

8. The playback device of Claim 7, comprising:

a receiving unit operable to display a setup menu and receive  
25 an input of the age, and

a conversion table associating a plurality of ages with a plurality of rating levels in a one-to-one fashion,

wherein the conversion into the rating level is performed by

referring to the conversion table.

9. The playback device of Claim 3, wherein

the recording medium is a first recording medium, and

5 one of the first recording medium and a second recording medium  
is loaded on the playback device, and

the playback device, further comprising:

a receiving unit operable to display a setup menu and receive an  
input of a rating level on the setup menu;

10 a conversion unit operable to convert the input rating level into  
a numeric indicating an age; and

an auxiliary playback unit operable to, when the second recording  
medium is loaded, select from among a plurality of pieces of playback  
path information recorded on the second recording medium, a piece having  
15 the input rating level, and play a digital stream recorded on the second  
recording medium according to the selected piece,

wherein the execution of the control program is performed only  
when the first recording medium is loaded, and the selection of the  
at least one of the pieces of playback path information is performed  
20 according to a result of the execution.

10. The playback device of Claim 3, wherein

the recording medium is a first recording medium, and

one of the first recording medium and a second recording medium  
25 is loaded on the playback device, and

the playback device, further comprising:

a receiving unit operable to display a menu showing combinations  
between ages and playback levels, and receive a specification for one

of an age and a rating level;

a conversion table operable to perform interconversion between an age and a rating level based on the specification; and

an auxiliary playback unit operable to, when the second recording medium is loaded, select from among a plurality of pieces of playback path information recorded on the second recording medium, a piece having a rating level matching the specified rating level, and play a digital stream recorded on the second recording medium according to the selected piece,

wherein the execution of the control program is performed only when the first recording medium is loaded, and the selection of the at least one of the pieces of playback path information is performed according to a result of the execution.

11. The playback device of Claim 3 including a plurality of status registers, wherein

one of the status registers stores therein a numeric indicating an age of a user,

another one of the status registers stores therein a date of birth of the user,

the age-indicating numeric is calculated from the date of birth and a current date, and

the execution of the control program is performed when the recording medium is loaded, and the selection of the selection of the at least one of the pieces of playback path information is performed according to a result of the execution.

12. The playback device of Claim 11, wherein

the recording medium is a first recording medium, and  
one of the first recording medium and a second recording medium  
is loaded on the playback device, and

the playback device, further comprising:

5 a conversion unit operable to convert, when the second recording  
medium is loaded and determined as the second recording medium, the  
age-indicating numeric into a playback level; and

an auxiliary playback unit operable to select from among a  
plurality of pieces of playback path information recorded on the second  
10 recording medium, a piece having a playback level matching the playback  
level, and play a digital stream recorded on the second recording medium  
according to the selected piece,

wherein the execution of the control program is performed only  
when the first recording medium is loaded.

15  
13. A program causing a computer to perform playback processing of a  
digital stream using playback path information and to select, in a case  
where a plurality of pieces of the playback path information are recorded  
on a recording medium having the digital stream recorded thereon, at  
20 least one of the pieces of the playback path information using a value  
stored in a status register indicating an age of a user of the computer.

14. A playback method for playing a digital stream using playback path  
information, the playback method comprising the step of:

25 selecting, in a case where a plurality of pieces of the playback  
path information are recorded on a recording medium having the digital  
stream recorded thereon, at least one of the pieces of the playback  
path information using a numeric indicating an age of a user.